



Suicide Awareness



Prevention of Suicide
and
Self-Destructive Behavior



What Is Suicide?



...the deliberate ending of one's own life.

- Serious suicidal thoughts or threats
- Self-destructive acts
- Attempts to harm, but not kill oneself
- Attempts to commit suicide
- Completed suicide



What Causes Suicide?



- Break or difficulties in interpersonal relationships
- Death of a loved one
- Worry about job or school performance
- Moving to a new environment
- Loss of social or financial status
- Drugs and/or alcohol



Why Should We Know About Suicide?



- Anyone may stop a person considering suicide
- Often express feelings to ask for help
- Help available for people with these feelings
- Many suicide attempts can be prevented



Why Suicide?



No simple answer...

- “Just wants to stop the pain”
- Sense of loneliness and isolation
- Feels helpless, hopeless and worthless
- Cannot cope with their problems
- Way to escape unbearable pain



Depression



Change in behavior

Change in sleep habits

Change in weight

Decreased productivity

Decreased sex drive

Difficulty concentrating

Feelings of worthlessness

Loss of energy

Loss of interest

No response to praise

Pessimistic attitude

Tearfulness or crying

Thoughts of death/suicide

Withdraw from friends
and family



Hopelessness



- Believing all resources to be exhausted
- Feeling that no one cares
- Believing that the world may be better off without you
- Total loss of control over self and others
- Believing death to be the only way out of pain



Warning Signs Of Suicide



- Previous attempt – may be at risk to try again
- Family history of alcoholism or suicide
- Medical illness – changes in weight
- Mental illness - depression and hopelessness
- Loss of relationship
- Changes in personality or behavior



Immediate Danger Signals



Talking about or making plans to commit suicide

- Putting personal affairs in order
- Giving away personal possessions
- Obsession with death - sad music/poetry
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Acquiring or access to lethal means



What To Do



If you believe that someone may be suicidal,
it is important to remember:

- Take threats seriously
- Answer cries for help
- Confront the problem
- Tell them you care



Follow Through



- Stay or accompany the individual
- Get the person seen by a medical professional or professional mental health provider
- Notify the Chain of Command when applicable
- Notify police in life-threatening situations



What Not To Do



- Don't keep a deadly secret
- Don't leave the person alone
- Don't overreact or appear shocked
- Don't argue or try to reason
- Don't analyze the person's motives
- Don't challenge the person



Postvention



- Sense of Guilt
- Bereavement Counseling
- Families May Experience Denial, Fear, Shame
- Mental Health or Chaplain Resources
- Support Group Assistance



References



- DA Pam 600-24 Suicide Prevention and Psychological Autopsy
- DA Pam 600-70 Guide to the Prevention of Suicide and Self-Destructive Behavior
www.armyg1.army.mil/HR/SUICIDE.asp
- Suicide Prevention - A Resource Manual for the United States Army prepared by the American Association of Suicidology and the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM) @ 1 (800) 222-9698

<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/>



Resources



Life Lines:

- 911 Emergency
- 1-800-833-6622 www.armyfamiliesonline.org
- 1-800-SUICIDE for the National Suicide Hotline
- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org